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COMICALITIES OF INDIAN ENGLISH.

NOTHING strikes the new-comer to any of the great towns of India more than the large number of natives who speak a little English. The missionary and government colleges are every year in a rapidly increasing ratio pouring forth thousands of young men imbued with the higher and nobler spirit of the English language, and chastened in thought by the purer literature of the Saxon race. The pettiest tradesmen too have acquired a greater or less knowledge of the tongue of their rulers, and are, like their more educated countrymen, kept back by no bashfulness from using to the utmost what knowledge they possess.

Every person who tries to express himself through the medium of a foreign language is certain at times to make some ludicrous mistakes; and it is only natural that the Indian should be extremely liable to fall into absurdities both of language and thought, when there is remembered not only the contrast between the ornate and inflated style of most oriental languages and the plain and sober Saxon, but the vast differences between the customs of the East and West, and the new world of ideas into which the Hindu mind is introduced through the medium of the English tongue.

The love of the *Baboo* or native gentleman for big words, high-sounding and stereotyped phrases—foreign or classical, if possible—and great rolling sentences, has given rise in Calcutta to their style being commonly termed *Babooese*. One of the best examples which we know of this style is a Memoir of a respected Calcutta Judge published not long ago by a relative. It was so perfect a specimen of *Babooese*, that the first edition was soon bought up; and when a second edition was called for, the author, highly pleased, begged leave to make some alterations and improvements; but the publishers would not hear of it. In it, the Judge's personal appearance is thus described: 'When a boy, he was filamentous; but gradually, in the course of time, he became plump as a partridge.' His power of arguing a question

with 'capacious, strong, and laudable ratiocination and eloquence,' soon brought him an income; and he is said to have used it 'to extricate his family from the difficulties in which it had lately been enwarped, and to restore happiness and sunshine to those sweet and well-beloved faces, on which he had not seen the soft and fascinating beams of a simper for many a grim-visaged year.' But the account of his death is curiously the most amusing part of the book: 'And having said these words, he hermetically sealed his lips, not to open them again. All the well-known doctors of Calcutta that could be procured for a man of his position and wealth were brought—Doctors Payne, Fayrer, and Nilmadhub Mookerjee, and others; they did what they could do, with their puissance and knack of medical knowledge; but it proved after all as if to milk the ram! His wife and children had not the mournful consolation to hear his last words; he remained *sotto voce* for a few hours, and then went to God at about six P.M.'

The following, from a Report sent in to a civil surgeon by a hospital assistant, is very suggestive as regards the language in use by the medical men whom this young man was accustomed to meet: 'At or about nine A.M. of the 21st October 1877, I held a *post-mortem* examination on the carcass of Mussamut Sooknea, a female, aged about thirty years, and found her body frightfully swelled and entirely decomposed.'

A very amusing species of literature is the letter from the native excusing himself or begging some favour. A boy begins a letter explaining his non-attendance at school: 'BENEVOLENT SIR—The wolf of sickness has laid hold on the flock of my health.' An office lad writes: 'HONoured SIR—Being affected in the stomach and vomiting, I am too sorry I cannot attend to office to-day.' A production matched by the application of another clerk to a Calcutta firm for leave of absence: 'SIR—With due respect and humble submission, I beg leave to state that I shall feel too much assisted if your honour leave me to-day.' The writer received recently the following from one of his servants, written probably by a

schoolboy: 'RESPECTABLE SIR—I most respectfully beg to inform you that my marriage will be on the 13th inst. of May. Now please to leave me only for 2 months. My father will be as a candidate for me. Kindly grant to supply your service by my father, who will repay those money which I have borrowed from one.'

But it is from among the answers to the questions in the numerous college and university papers that the most laughable absurdities are to be found. Take two bright scientific ideas, well worth the attention of the natural philosopher and the physiologist. One replies to the question, 'Why are the days longer in summer and shorter in winter?'—thus: 'Because heat expands and cold contracts.' Another, in describing the circulation of the blood, remarks, that it goes down one leg and comes up the other.

Professors in missionary colleges are often startled with the curious replies given by the students in their Scripture papers. Moses is described by one as a sort of provision merchant: 'He supplied the Israelites in the wilderness with manna and other necessaries.' In a relation of the parable of the Prodigal, otherwise as good as could have been given by any student of theology, occurred this odd sentence: "'Father,' said the young man, 'I am no more worthy to be called thy son, therefore let me be as one of thy hired servants;'" but the father called a barber to shave him,' &c.

The average undergraduate is to a great extent made up of words and phrases. Here are a few examples of his replies to questions formally put: Q. To eke out. Ans. To extract milk from a cow.—Q. Pandemonium. Ans. A mountain in Greece.—Q. Blue-stockings. Ans. An order of knights.—Q. Bill of lading. Ans. An account written by a person overboard.—Q. To walk the plank. Ans. To do a thing in which there are many dangers.—Q. With his mistress's favour on his arm. Ans. Taking the baby in his arms.—Q. Classical equivalent of 'all-powerful.' Ans. Full of stout.—His ideas too of some things in the commonly taught subjects of history, literature, grammar, and geography are certainly unique. We have not met the boy who described the curfew as 'an island in the Mediterranean, surmounted Rufus, because it had red hair'; nor have we seen the sign 'European loafer,' said to be in Calcutta over the shop of a native baker; but a student told us once that the Puritans were the followers of *Ignis-fatuus*. He was evidently thinking of the Jesuits and their founder, Ignatius Loyola. Another, apparently a Darwinian, says of Shakespeare: 'Shakspeare was the father of English poetry. His fame hangs chiefly by his Canterbury Tail.' An adept in grammar, in reply to the question, 'Explain the difference between direct and indirect narration,' evidently thinking an example better than a direct reply, wrote: 'Direct sentence—He died; indirect sentence—He kicked the bucket.' Another, equally familiar with geographical terms, in answer to the question, 'What are the chief feeders of the river Irrawadi?' adorned his paper with the innocent reply—'Alligators.'

The Hindu is undoubtedly a fruitful source of very ridiculous blunders in the use of English; but no one who has had much to do with him, can doubt his linguistic faculty, or the power with

which the English tongue can be used by many native preachers and lawyers of real ability and chastened eloquence; nor can any one who knows aught of India, overestimate the value of the English tongue in the spread of European culture, science, and religion among its countless millions.

A LIFE'S ATONEMENT.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

'It is all atoned for; but the atonement was not mine.'

I SAT beside the injured man, so marvellously discovered; and as my mind grew calmer, I surveyed the chain of circumstance which led me here, and heaped surmise on surmise as I strove to guess what hideous compulsory fate had driven such a man as Frank Fairholt had been to such a place as this. When Penkridge came at last accompanied by a surgeon, I waited only to carry away a sounder opinion of the medical aspect of the case than I could form. I had already given the patient a little brandy, and had moistened his lips and temples with the spirit; and his pulse was somewhat accelerated when the surgeon came.

'I can have no opinion yet,' he said, in answer to my inquiry. 'He is an old man, and a shock of this kind may prove fatal.'

'Will you be good enough to remain with him?' I asked. 'I will drive to Dr Brand, and either bring him back or leave word for him to come.'

'Dr Brand?' said the surgeon. 'Do you mean the Dr Brand? of Wimpole Street?'

'He has taken a great interest in this man,' I answered, not caring to give either Penkridge or the surgeon any insight into my discovery; 'and he will be glad to come.'

'I'm afraid the poor fellow will be scarcely able to pay Dr Brand's fees,' said the surgeon.

'I will be answerable for that,' I returned; and at once sped in pursuit of the Doctor, whom I found in the act of sitting down to dinner. I told him hastily what I knew; and he snatched up his hat and ran to the cab in haste. As we rode over the brief space between Wimpole Street and Bolter's Rents, he said only: 'Whether this extraordinary belief of yours be true or false, Campbell, there is a mystery about this man which may be unravelled now.'

'You know my cousin and his wife?' I asked; and he nodded in reply. 'Look,' I added, 'at their portraits in pencil on his wall.'

He nodded again gravely; and neither of us spoke again until we reached the room. The surgeon met him with marked respect, and made some observation on the condition of the patient, which Dr Brand disregarded. By what intuition he knew, I cannot tell, but the physician shook his head as he looked at the prone figure, and after the briefest examination, laid the patient's lax hand gently down. 'He will probably rally in four-and-twenty hours by the exhibition of cordials,' he said in a low tone to the surgeon; 'but recovery is impossible.'

The surgeon bowed assent to this judgment; and the physician turned silently, and guided by my glance, walked to the fireplace and looked at the drawing above it. Guided by my glance again, he crossed the room, and looked at the drawing on the opposite wall. He said nothing then; but

after carefully surveying the face, and standing before it thoughtfully a moment, he produced his pocket-book, and wrote out a prescription.

'This is a case,' he said to the surgeon, 'in which I take a deep and special interest. Can you oblige me by securing a good nurse? We must do what we can for him, poor fellow; glancing to the bed. The surgeon responding that he was happy to be of service, took his leave; and Dr Brand holding him a moment by the button-hole, asked him to return at his earliest convenience. This he promised; and a minute later, Penkridge having been dismissed, the Doctor and I stood side by side, looking down on the unconscious figure. 'Tell me,' he said in a low voice, 'on what you base your belief about this man's identity.'

In the same tone, I sketched the story rapidly; and the Doctor nodded here and there to signify attention. 'These,' he said, waving his hand towards the sketches on the wall, 'are potent proof, certainly; but we shall probably know all when the patient rallies. It will be strange and terrible,' he murmured, 'if such a tragedy has been near us all these years, and we have never guessed it.'

'My cousin Will is in town,' I reminded him, 'with his wife. My uncle is with them. It must be told to one of them. But Maud should never hear of it.'

'No,' he answered. 'I remember the story well. They were lovers. We must spare her, if we can. Wait until the surgeon returns, and then find Mr Hartley, and tell him what you believe. Let him be here before this hour tomorrow.'

I promised; and Dr Brand departed. I waited until the darkness fell upon me, and I could see only the faint silvery gleam of head and beard as I looked upon the bed. And in the solemn silence, broken only by the breathing of the dying man, and by the roll of traffic, which sounded there like a murmur from the shore heard far inland, the better thoughts which had long struggled within me had full sway. I called to mind all the suffering which I had known to spring from the one tragedy whose end was drawing near so swiftly; and I vowed within myself that the hearts which had been so wounded, should henceforth know no added pang through me.

When at last my watch was over, and I had seen the nurse take her place, I betook myself to the Langham and asked for Uncle Ben. I discovered that he had not been told of Maud's attempt to persuade me, and that he had gone out to a dinner of some City magnates, with whom he had been associated in his business days. But Maud and her husband and Polly were there, spending a restful evening in quiet talk. I told them of my better purpose with regard to Uncle Ben, and shrank myself of my ingratitude and hardness. And all the time, as Will and Maud talked happily, and as I read in every glance that passed between them, and in every tone as they addressed each other, their settled surety in each other's love; and when I saw in Maud's dear face the placid happiness that beautified it, my thoughts turned back to the dying man who lay in the mean chamber so near at hand, and I thanked God that the two scenes were so wide apart in

spite of nearness. It was after midnight when Uncle Ben returned, and Will and I were then alone. He came in with a sad and weary look, which touched me to the heart. He did not see me at first, and started at my voice.

'Uncle,' I said, 'I have acted vilely, and I am here to ask your pardon.'

He made no answer in words; but coming near me, he placed his arms about my neck, as he had done when I was a child, and kissed me. Then with eyes a little dimmed, we shook hands heartily, and our reconciliation was complete. Will bade us both a cheery good-night, and left us; and then I told my story. It was listened to with such wonder as may be imagined; and my uncle, much perturbed by it, promised to be with me before noon, and to accompany me to Bolter's Rents; reserving until after his visit, all opinion as to whether Will should know of the belief at which I had arrived. We met at the appointed time, and walked to Oxford Street together.

'I have told Will privately,' said my uncle as we went, 'that in two hours' time I *may* want to see him on a matter of great importance; and he's promised to wait for me.'

I understood from this that he had decided, in case he shared in my belief, to communicate the facts to Will; and it seemed to me that it was scarcely possible to do otherwise. I had warned him of the nurse's presence: and when we reached the room, I pointed without comment to the sketches on the walls; and he stood before them in deep amazement. Then after long and careful study of the face of the dying man, he beckoned me, and left the room on tiptoe. When we reached the court, he turned an agitated countenance upon me. 'There's nothin' surer in the world, Johnny,' he said with tremulous solemnity. 'It's the man. I should ha' known him in a crowd, if I'd had reason to look at him.'

'Mr Hastings saw him,' I returned, 'when he was probably less changed than he is now, and did not know him.'

'Yes,' assented my uncle; 'but Hastings didn't have the pictures to guide him; and he thought he'd buried him 'ears an' 'ears ago, in the Crimea.'

My uncle's disturbance was so evident, that I would not allow him to enter the hotel. We appointed a meeting-place; and I proceeded to the hotel alone, and sent a waiter to say that Mr Hartley would be glad to see Mr Fairholt at once. In a short time Will came down, and in some surprise set out with me. He asked in vain for an explanation; and we drove to Bolter's Rents in silence. There was a little crowd in the court waiting with anxious looks for news. Penkridge formed one of this sad knot; and touching his hat to me, humbly said that the nurse had left the patient for a time. He had recovered consciousness, and had asked to see a minister of religion. A priest who had within the last two or three months been in the habit of visiting the Rents, had been there at the time, and was now with him. I could not even yet bear to break the whole news to my Cousin Will; but I said to him as we walked towards the end of the court: 'We have what I am afraid will prove a terrible surprise for you. We would have spared you if we could; but we did not think it possible or right, and we have acted for the best.'

My uncle nodded in confirmation of my words,

and held out a hand, warning us to silence as we reached the foot of the stairs. Slowly and silently, we climbed story after story until we reached the last flight, when we heard the sound of a measured voice reading. As we stood, we could even hear the words which told the parable of the Prodigal Son. At a further gesture from my uncle's hand, we went on silently, and paused upon the landing. There Will laid a hand upon my arm; and in the light which reached us through the half-open door, I saw his lips shape a word—a name. I nodded, in token that I knew it; and we stood in silence. Another voice spoke in repetition of the immortal words—“**BUT WHEN HE WAS YET A GREAT WAY OFF, HIS FATHER SAW HIM.**”

Will Fairholt's face turned ghastly pale; and like one who had no power or will to stand or stay, but moving as though another mind impelled him, he passed into the room. We who remained without with beating hearts, heard on a sudden a wailing cry, and silence fell, broken after a space by sobs and murmurs.

‘Will,’ said the voice which had spoken last, ‘God is merciful. It is all atoned for; but the atonement was not mine.’

A sigh followed; and there came another silence, and then Will's voice called upon his brother: ‘Frank! Frank! Look at me! Speak to me!’

There was no sound of answer; and when we dared at last to enter the room, we saw the brother a second time bereaved, upon his knees beside the bed, with his face lying on the dead man's outstretched hand. And in the open eyes from which the glory of the prophecy of death had not yet faded, there was peace unspeakable.

There was one in the garb of a friar who stood beside the bed with downcast eyes, whom all the living there had known and loved, whom we could know and love no longer. And after a while he went his way with downcast eyes and bitter tears; and there was no word spoken and no sign made among us. It was—Gascoigne.

We drew poor Will away gently, and sent the nurse to her last melancholy function. And whilst Will was weeping for his brother, Hastings came and learned the story, and was smitten with grief and wonder. But when we were all a little stronger, we made a solemn pact that our knowledge should rest among us; and only we four, and Dr Brand, know upon whose grave the flowers bloom so sweet in the quiet churchyard near Frank Fairholt's ancient home.

THE END.

HOLIDAY FATALITIES.

As sure as the welcome holiday season comes round, it produces its bitter crop of disastrous accidents. Year after year, the same doleful autumnal experience repeats itself, until we have come to regard it as a fatality which is all the more dreadful because, while we can clearly foresee, we feel helpless to prevent it. As soon as the wheat begins to ripen, or the golden sheaves to nod upon the plain, our human hives appear agitated with an instinctive desire to migrate to other neighbourhoods or other lands. As they swarm preparatory to their pursuit of pleasure,

the reflection, happily no doubt, will never occur to the individual rover, that of those who set out, a proportion are fated never to return, and that he himself may be one of the predestined victims.

The tourist cannot, of course, be held responsible for what befalls him from the railway or the steamboat accident; but these are not the dangers to which he is peculiarly exposed. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred fatal casualties which are invariably recorded at this time of the year, it will be found to have been the natural effect of the sufferer's own wilfulness or folly. These discreditable qualities are too often allowed to pass under other and more flattering names for the adventurous scaler of ice-armoured mountains, or leaper of yawning chasms; and perhaps this amiable indulgence is in great measure the cause and mischief of it all. The truth that bluntly tells an Englishman he is a fool for his pains, as soon as he has slid down from some snowy peak never essayed before, is never likely to be popular or even sufferable. Is he not, after all, a sort of hero? Has he not, standing where an angel might fear to tread, and balancing his life on the point of his climbing-staff, exhibited himself to a breathless and envious world of ‘foreigners,’ as a sign or symptom of national fortitude, determination, and enterprise? But is there not something gratuitous, to say the least of it, in this self-imposed mission of personally manifesting these manly virtues of one's countrymen? Surely, the real and legitimate occasions for the exercise of these are sufficient, without wantonly calling them out, and on vain and false pretences, in our pleasant and peaceful holiday rambles.

Then again, the tourist who is apparently bent upon qualifying himself for the distinction of having braved every danger that a reckless life can know, ought to pause a moment and consider those who have a vested interest in him; and even to remember that it is ill-bred to obtrude an unpleasant subject upon society at a time when it signifies its disposition to enjoy itself; and the tourist is certainly guilty of that offence when, through his own foolhardiness, he presents the spectacle of a hideous, headlong crash down the side of a sheer precipice. It is a most painful duty to reflect in satirical terms on the folly of any man when he has paid the forfeit of it with his life, and for this reason it is seldom performed. But so to evade it may be a false tenderness, and a perversion of the maxim that instructs us to say nought but good of the dead.

In a certain city of antiquity, a suicidal mania seized upon the women, which neither appeals nor punishments could stay, until a certain legislator gifted with an insight into female human nature ‘passed a Bill’ whereby the successful suicides were condemned to be strung up by their unconscious heels in the public market-place. The legislator was of course a fiend; but there were no more suicides among the ladies. Now, to build a theory on this scandalous story—might not tourists be less reckless of their lives, if they were premonished that in cases where they culpably lost them, their folly would be visited with unsparing contempt and reproach? Numberless families are able to

boast or deplore the possession of one member distinguished from the rest by a spirit of perilous adventure, a familiar object of constant maternal anxiety mingled with admiration, in English domestic life. We are far from indorsing many of the undue strictures on these interesting varieties of our species. The boy whom Nature has inspired with a genuine passion and genius for climbing the highest tree in the village, or for tempting the treacherous ledge of some beetling cliff in pursuit of birds' eggs, is most generally provided with the safeguards of self-possession, strong nerve, and common-sense. The lives of not a few great men remind us that such a danger-seeking boyhood, as, for instance, that of Clive, has often produced the hero or saviour of his country. But this is the real thing, the strong-welded handiwork of Nature. It is the 'spurious article,' the Brummagem imitation which, we imagine, is responsible for the greater portion of our holiday fatalities. We are all doubtless acquainted with one specimen or another of that headstrong conceit, which without experience and without the requisite qualities, and in derision of the warnings of wiser heads, runs upon an undertaking not with a rational recognition of its difficulties, but with a foolish and ignorant denial of them.

Examples of this kind of folly will readily suggest themselves to many families who, by reason of the vagaries of some unfortunate individual, are for a good portion of the year in a constant state of fear and trembling. There is the man who, having been accustomed all his life to the most unemotional of hacks, suddenly announces his instant intention, in the presence of his trembling wife and shrinking little ones, to bestride some half-broken steed, at which even the most experienced equestrians have looked askance. Then there is the worthy citizen who has never been in a sailing-boat in his life, but has convinced himself, from ten minutes' observation, that the management thereof is the easiest thing in the world, and who forthwith effects a charter on favourable terms; but is presently fished up with a boathook, and tries to evade the question of damages by insisting on the unseaworthiness of the craft. Then again, there is the man who, having on several occasions swum round the public bath in his native town, is suddenly fired with the desire, on some rock-bound coast, to take a boat a mile or so from the shore, and there plunge headlong into the deep. He swims one way, the boat drifts another; and fortunate for him if they come together again, and if he be able afterwards to explain the difference between diving from a boat, and clambering back into her with weary limbs over the unaccommodating side or forbidding stern. In the above are indicated but a few types of self-willed and inexperienced folly; and it is easy to imagine that when such men are excited by the keen mountain air of foreign lands, and by a spirit of perilous emulation, and spurred by their characteristic temper to deride all warning and contradict every authority, they will do their best to furnish us every year with a list of horrible misadventures to mar the reminiscences of our annual holidays. The unfortunate English gentleman who lately lost his life on the mountains in the neighbourhood of Lake Lucerne, is a melancholy case in

point. He had been spending an afternoon with his son, a boy ten years of age, at Seelisberg, two hours walk from Beckenried, where his wife was waiting their return. Instead of taking the ordinary road back, which, 'though rather steep, is safe,' the gentleman, in spite of descending darkness, in spite of evident signs of an approaching storm, and of warnings by some of the natives of the extreme danger of any such attempt, especially in the shades of evening, determined to make a short cut to Beckenried by a footway which is 'so difficult that even in the full daylight it is only used by shepherd-boys and goat-herds, provided with climbing-sticks.'

Surely it is not too much to ask of such rash tempters of Providence to remember that if the consequences likely to ensue from their own courted mishaps cannot be brought vividly enough before them to act as a deterrent of their recklessness, they are at all events bound to refuse to jeopardise the very lives of those who at home are the nearest and dearest to their hearts.

CECIL'S MISTAKE.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

AFTER the first glamour of those early days, prosaic arrangements began to be discussed. Mr Tresilian urged most strongly that the marriage should take place as soon as possible. Mrs Maynard was by no means in as great a hurry; nor was either Cecil or Edgar in haste to bring the betrothal to a close directly. But the father's persistency had its way, and it was agreed that they were to be married quietly in September. The lovers were very happy, though Cecil sometimes thought Olive Denzil had grown a little strange since that memorable evening at Mrs Appleton's. To tell the truth, Olive had determined to try her power over him, his choice of Cecil having piqued her exceedingly. She did not deliberately intend to win him away; indeed, she never thought much about what might follow her action. She just did what pleased her, and took her chance.

The season was drawing to a close; June was nearly over; but the Denzils had a party, which was to be a sort of finish to the gaieties they had been having without cessation for two months. Olive was a capital actress, and she had insisted on getting up some theatricals. She of course had the effective part; and Edgar was to do the handsome lover to her French Countess of the Revolution period. She looked very charming in the part, and acted wonderfully well—too well, Cecil thought, considering the circumstances of the case. Edgar, at the perpetual rehearsals, which he thought great fun, had been rather stiff as a lover; but on the evening in question, he got warmed up by the audience, infected as he was by Olive's splendid acting, and intoxicated by her fascination. He meant no harm; but to Cecil the situation was certainly trying.

When it was all over, Edgar came to her for applause. She only said a few words very quietly; but she involuntarily shrank coldly from him as he placed his arm on the sofa behind her, almost touching her shoulder. Olive sent a message to her begging her to come up to the room to help in

getting her hair right again. She went up at once. Olive was standing before the glass with a flushed face, that enhanced her already dangerous beauty.

'Well,' she cried gaily, 'how solemn you look, Cecy! Did you like the piece?'

Cecil answered with some hesitation: 'I thought you acted beautifully; but I'm not sure I liked the play itself.'

'And Edgar—Mr Tresillian—didn't he do it splendidly?' said Olive with a sort of triumphant smile.

Cecil was of too open a nature; she could not help speaking coldly and with a little haughtiness, though she tried hard. 'Yes,' she answered; 'and your dresses were a great success.'

'You jealous little thing!' cried Olive, laughingly pinching her cheek. 'You are going to monopolise Edgar altogether, and you grudge me even his sham courtship.'

'You are quite wrong, Olive,' returned Cecil earnestly. 'I own I did not like the play; it was a little bit too free, I thought. But indeed I am not jealous of Edgar. I only can't help wondering always that he chose me, and not you. I cannot do anything; and you are so clever at whatever you try. But since he does prefer me, I should be a fool to be jealous.'

Olive was irritated by these words. She saw that Cecil meant what she said; and in her present excited, unnatural mood, she grudged her security in Edgar's love. 'It was a happy blunder of yours, Cecil,' she said, almost before she knew what she was saying. 'You found out a splendid way of securing your own success—by chance.'

'What do you mean?' demanded Cecil haughtily.

'Oh, never mind! Nothing. What an idiot I am!'

'Olive! I *will* know. What blunder did I commit to make Edgar—to secure my happiness?'

'Well, if you *will* have it,' said Olive impatiently—'and it can make no difference to you now—do you remember the letter you wrote me the day, or two days before he proposed to you?'

Cecil turned deadly pale; she just formed the words: 'Yes—well?'

'Now Cecil, don't look like that! What does it matter? I wish I had not said anything.'

Cecil seized her wrist. 'Tell me,' she cried fiercely—'tell me, or Edgar shall— Did he see it?'

Olive reluctantly nodded.

'Did you shew it to him?' demanded Cecil again in the same tone.

'No, no! O Cecil, what a wretch I am to tell you! You sent the two notes wrongly directed.'

Olive Denzil had very little heart, but she did feel genuine sorrow and remorse when she saw how deep the stab had gone. The poor girl's face was piteous as she sat down beside the table in the silence of despair.

'Dear, dear Cecy, do forgive me!' cried Olive, flinging herself beside her agitated companion.

Cecil quietly put her hand away as it caught her own. 'Please, go down, Olive,' she said in a voice once more calm, but which seemed to have lost its former youthful tone. 'I will follow directly. I am all right. I only want to be alone a little while.'

Olive obeyed her, feeling thoroughly ashamed of herself for almost the first time in her life.

Very soon Cecil reappeared. She looked rather pale, but talked quite as usual; and no one but her mother and Edgar noticed anything.

'My darling,' said Edgar, 'you do not look like yourself to-night! Have I vexed you?'

'Please, do not worry me now, Edgar,' she said sharply. 'I can never talk with a headache.' She turned away from him; and very shortly she persuaded her mother to take leave.

Edgar saw them to the carriage as usual; but Cecil did not speak except to murmur a cold 'Good-night,' as he pressed her hand.

Before he was up next morning, a little packet was put into his hands. It contained the pretty diamond ring and other presents he had given Cecil, and a little note, which ran thus: 'I return you your presents. Do what you will with mine. You will not wonder, I think, at my breaking off our engagement when I tell you I know now that you only sacrificed yourself to me out of pity. It was good of you; and you have been very good to me since; but if you know me at all, Edgar, you must know I never will bear to be the wife of one who has no real love for me. Do not think I have taken this step from pique or any passing feeling of the sort. I am quite, quite sure I am doing right in releasing you. Do not try and see me yet.—C. M.'

At first, Edgar was utterly at a loss to understand the motive which had actuated this step on Cecil's part; and then it flashed upon him that Olive had betrayed the secret he had felt he would have guarded from Cecil with his life. He could have shed tears, when he realised what Cecil's shame would be. He resolved he should see her.

When he got to Gloster Terrace, and was shewn in as usual, he was kept waiting some time; and at last Mrs Maynard came to him, looking very grave. He started forward as the door opened, and then stood disappointed. 'Mrs Maynard—where is Cecil?'

'She is up-stairs, Edgar; but she will not see you. She begged you not to urge it. Indeed, it would be useless. Cecil is very determined, as you know, when she takes a notion in her head.'

'But, dear Mrs Maynard, what can I do?' pleaded Edgar.

'My dear boy, you can do nothing but wait. If she sees you keep really faithful to her, she may come back to you. But I believe worrying her now would only drive her farther away. You know what Cecil is—how proud and sensitive.'

Edgar pled to see her; Mrs Maynard shook her head. 'No, Edgar; that cannot be. You had better do what I tell you. Don't attempt to see her till after we return from Wales. We go in a fortnight. Be true to her, and keep up a good heart, and then perhaps all may go well. Now go; there's a good boy; and good-bye.' And Edgar obeyed her, sadly enough.

Mr Tresillian took the rupture of his son's engagement so deeply to heart, that Edgar was quite surprised at it. He expected his father to sympathise with him in his trouble of course; but he seemed depressed and unhappy beyond all reason. He was out longer than ever, slaving at his work in the City, and whenever Edgar saw

him, he thought him looking more and more dejected. Edgar went a walking tour by himself, in a morose and sombre frame of mind, and tramped through beautiful country, thinking of Cecil, and regretting her more each day that seemed to take him farther from her.

Autumn had come, and the Maynards were back again in Gloster Terrace. Sea-breezes had embrowned Cecil's face, and given her a healthy colour; but sea and air and change alike had failed to bring back the old brightness of her eyes. Edgar had also returned to town. He seemed to know by intuition when the Maynards were at home again, and appeared the very same day to the dull, handsome Kensington house. He met his father at dinner, and was terribly shocked by his looks. Mr Tresillian seemed to have grown twenty years older; his voice was altered; his manner was feverishly restless; he ate nothing, but what was a most unusual thing for him, drank glass after glass of wine. To-night he seemed preoccupied, and did not attend to anything his son said, but treated him with more affection than ever.

"You don't look happy, my boy," said the old gentleman, laying his hand for a moment upon his shoulder. "Are you fretting still about that trouble with Cecil?"

"I don't find I get used to it," replied Edgar bitterly.

"Ah!" said the father, with a strange ghastly smile, "boys are apt to fret about trifles! Wait till you are my age, my lad; you won't make mountains out of mole-hills then."

"And you, father?" returned Edgar, alarmed by the look and manner, "what is wrong with you? I am sure you are ill. Do consult some one about yourself."

"Oh, no, no, Edgar! I'm not ill. It is only business, dear boy; nothing but business worries! —There, there; go out. I shall have coffee in the study, and not see you again. So good-night—good-night; and God bless you!" and he pressed his boy's hand hard.

Edgar wondered when he felt how the hand burned him. He did not like to leave his father; but the latter insisted upon it that he was all right, and should be busy that evening, and went up to his study with slow, heavy steps.

The next morning, about eight o'clock, Edgar was awakened by a loud knocking at his door. "Hollo!" he called, "who's there? What's wanted?"

It was the voice of his father's man-servant that replied: "Please to come out and go to your father, sir, in the study. I fancy he must be ill. He has not been to bed at all last night."

Edgar flung on his things and proceeded to his father's door. He knocked loudly. No reply. It was an awful stillness. "Help me to burst it in, Williams," he said under his breath. "It is not a strong door."

The two men set their shoulders against the panels, and pushed with their whole strength. The door yielded; and Edgar entered the room.

The reading-lamp stood on the table still alight; a tray was beside it, on which stood an empty coffee cup and a small phial overturned. The table was covered with papers; and before Mr Tresillian's study-chair stood a blotting-pad and a

folded and directed letter. Edgar's eyes took in these details at one glance before he saw where his father was. A motionless figure knelt upon the rug, the head buried in the folded arms, which rested upon an arm-chair that stood by the side of the hearth. Edgar lifted the form of his father—his living father last night, and turned to the light a calm, dead face!

The letter, which was addressed to Edgar, in a few broken sentences told of the disgrace and shame which his father had brought upon himself, and under which he could no longer hold up his head among his fellows. "If I could spare you this last misery," it said, "I would; but my death will be less terrible for you than my life under all I should have to undergo—to leave you for ever, is the truest kindness your father can do you."

That morning, as Mrs Maynard and Cecil were sitting as usual busy with their ordinary occupations, a note was handed to the elder lady. She examined it with curiosity. "Whose writing is it, I wonder? It is like Edgar's, only that the hand is so shaky."

The mother slowly removed it from the envelope, with a vague foreboding of ill, and in a few seconds dropped it from her hands, with an exclamation of horror.

Cecil snatched it up, and echoed her mother's cry. In large, tremulous characters was traced: "A horrible thing has happened here. My father is dead—by his own hand—I cannot write.—E. T."

"Mamma!" Cecil gasped, seizing her mother's arm, "I must go to him. I will. He has no one."

"Impossible, Cecil," urged Mrs Maynard, trembling from head to foot, but maintaining self-command. "You could do no good at such a time. You could not stand it. I will go to him. My poor, motherless, fatherless boy, he shall not be left alone. Ring for the carriage, and keep calm till I return."

"Never fear for me," said Cecil with a strange, forced calm. "I shall keep strong, in case I am wanted. Yes; go to him, mamma. Comfort him, if you can. Perhaps you are right; you would be more comfort to him than I."

Mrs Maynard was at the door of Edgar's home in a very short time, and going swiftly upstairs, gently opened the study door. Edgar was sitting by the table, his head resting upon it. Poor fellow! Years seemed to have passed over him since yesterday. His face was piteous to see. Mrs Maynard put her arms round him, and kissed his cold damp forehead as his mother might have done. "Oh, how kind of you!" he muttered. "I thought I was quite alone! Help me to bear it."

By kindly motherly ways she led him to speak at last to her, and speaking brought tears after a while to relieve the dull agony of his suffering.

Mrs Maynard did not return home till after dark. When she entered the drawing-room, she found it only lighted by a dull red fire. A small white figure rose and came forward, and Cecil's voice, broken with bitter weeping, spoke to her: "Mamma! how is he?"

Her mother put her arm round her, and told

her by degrees, as well as she could, what Mr Tresillian's papers had disclosed to them of the ruin and disgrace that had occasioned his last fatal step.

Cecil said nothing. She sat bowed in the attitude of one whose grief is deeper than words can speak. At last she whispered a question or two. 'Then Edgar is actually left without anything?'

'Without anything that is justly his; he is determined to give up every penny.'

'And what will he do?'

'God knows! Poor boy; he has not learned to earn his bread.'

Cecil said no more; she only took her mother's hand, and kissed it again and again. Mrs Maynard knew what those kisses meant. Then she rang for lights and tea; and when she had seen her mother properly attended to, she slipped softly out of the room and went up-stairs.

The inquest, with its customary verdict of 'Temporary Insanity,' and the funeral, were over. Edgar sat alone in the firelight after a long weary day of unutterable distress. Slow tears gathered in his eyes as old memories of his father's indulgence and care rose up before him. No one was by; he was not ashamed of his tears now. The door opened very softly and with hesitation. 'Is it you, Williams?' he asked in his hopeless voice. 'I don't want any dinner to-day, tell cook.' But the person who had entered came into the room close up to him, and kneeling on the rug at his feet, looked up with deep yearning eyes—Cecil's eyes.

Edgar gave a start and a cry, almost of joy. 'Is it you? really you? Oh, how good—how good you, darling!'

She leant forward and clasped him round the neck. 'Yes; I am come, Edgar. No one knows it; but I could not—could not keep away. My poor boy, won't you let me stay and try to comfort you?'

He hid his face upon her head. 'My Cecil! Is it my own Cecil come?'

'Yes, your Cecil—your wife, your anything you will. I will never leave you—never! All that is mine shall be yours, and your trouble shall be mine too.'

'My own generous Cecil! But you are wrong in one thing—you do not give me everything. Is it possible that you think I do not love you?'

'Yes, Edgar, I did think so. You only took me because you thought I should not be happy without you.'

'Just at first, perhaps. But did you really believe that love did not come after?'

'But did it? did it? Edgar, for pity's sake, don't deceive me out of kindness!'

'Deceive you! No, Cecil; all deceptions are over for me now; Life is too stern and awful a reality. But to sacrifice yourself to me—you had better stop and think a little yet.'

'O Edgar, I have enough for two.'

'Hush!' he said haughtily; 'you don't think I am going to live on my wife! I was called to the bar, you know, but it was only a farce; I should never get practice.'

'I think,' returned Cecil timidly, 'Uncle Thornton might help you. Do not trouble about all that now, Edgar. Good-night.'

He rose, holding her to him, and the blaze

that suddenly sprang up in the fire shewed Cecil such a haggard face; so changed from her handsome lover of former times that her heart was wrung. She clung to him as she never had in those old easy days. 'May I walk back with you?' he said. 'I have not stirred out to-day. I think the air would do me good.'

So they walked back together to Gloster Terrace; and in that night's walk Edgar managed to persuade Cecil that he *did* love her as much as she loved him.

Edgar's honourable conduct in sacrificing all he had to satisfy as far as he was able some of his father's creditors, or rather victims, raised him up many friends; and the son of the dead man was gratified at receiving a kind letter from a certain great lord—whom he only just knew—offering him a post which would give him at least a living. There was no reason now for delaying his marriage; so one morning Edgar met Cecil, her mother, and uncle at the parish church, and they were married without any fuss whatever. Their honeymoon was only one fortnight's quiet in Wales, and then they came back to London to find their little house ready for them and looking like home already. That same evening a small packet was brought to Cecil. It contained a valuable bracelet and a note written in guarded but affectionate terms, and signed 'Olive Denzil.' All their anger against her had died out by this time; such terrible realities and such a perfect sympathy had come between that time and now, that Cecil could hardly recall her own bitter feelings. Olive really had not meant to do harm. She had only gratified a sudden impulse of malice, and she was glad when she knew that her words had not separated the lovers for ever.

So the mispent letter was not such a very dreadful mistake after all. It brought together two who never could have lived so well asunder; and Edgar often says it was the happiest mistake that could have been made, or he might have gone on all his life liking the wrong woman best.

ANECDOTES OF ENGLISH RURAL LIFE.

BY AN ENGLISH CLERGYMAN.

CONCLUDING PAPER.

DURING my residence in rural villages, I became familiar with a respectable yeoman, at whose house I was at all times a welcome visitor. He was a remarkably quiet little man. His wife was a fine buxom woman, whose rosy cheeks and dark benevolent eyes made her pleasant to look upon, and whose children, eight in number, were fine strapping lads. Going in one morning, the first thing that met my gaze was Mr Stafford seated in his armchair, a basin poised on the palm of his left hand, the contents of which he was deliberately supping with the aid of a teaspoon.

'You seem to be enjoying yourself this morning, Mr Stafford. What may you have got in the basin?' I asked.

'A drop o' salts!' was the odd and laconic reply.

'Salts!' I exclaimed in astonishment; 'and supping them with a teaspoon too!'

‘Ay,’ responded the yeoman quietly; ‘I allus sups salts wi’ a teaspoon, ‘cause ah loikes ‘em. Yo knaw if ah wor ta drink ‘em, th’ pleasure ‘ud be soon ower; but usin’ a teaspoon, why, th’ pleasure lasts a lang toime;’ saying which, he took another spoonful, and licked his lips with marked gusto.

‘My husband is a queer man, I assure you,’ chimed in Mrs Stafford, with studied politeness; ‘he has the queerest fancies of any man I know of. See you, Maister Brownson,’ she continued in unassumed earnestness, ‘I cannot keep a bit o’ mustard in the house because of him. I used to make a goodish bit, for the lads are fond of it; but he got to go to the cupboard, and he would lick, ay—lick the mustard until it was all licked up; so I gave over making it at last, and for many years we’ve done without.’

‘Ay, indeed; ma woife says th’ truth,’ put in Mr Stafford sorrowfully. ‘Ah niver gits a taste o’ mustard naa but twice a yer—that’s on th’ tithe-days. Th’ Vicar maks us a gooid dinner when we gang ta pay aar tithe; an’ soa, as sooin as ah gits inta th’ raam, ah luks abaat for th’ mustard-pot; an’ takin’ it inta ma hond, ah puts th’ contents all rand th’ rim o’ me plate, an’ soa ah gits a gradeley blow-in’ o’ mustard than. Yo knaw’—looking at me very significantly—‘it hes ta last hawf a yer.’

‘And see you, Maister Brownson,’ said the canny wife, ‘my husband is such a man for gruel; why, bless you, he would have me boil gruel day by th’ length, if I would’—

‘Nowt noa bether,’ put in Mr Stafford, interrupting his spouse in good-humour—‘nowt noa bether, ah say, owtter for mon or beseast. Naa, Maister Brownson, let a body advase yo as knaws; whenever yo feels aat ov soorts, as th’ sayin’ is, mak yorsen, or git yer woife—when yo’ve got yan—to mak yo a gooid jorum o’ waiter-gruel; moind, waiter-gruel, an’ drink it as yo git inta bed; an’ moind ma words, yo’ll feel reet at morn, noa mather what yo may ail. Theere’s nowt noa bether nor waiter-gruel owtter for mon or beseast, ah say!’

‘I wish I may be as fortunate as you in the choice of a wife,’ I remarked in perfect sincerity.

‘A very nat’ral wish, Maister Brownson,’ readily responded the little yeoman, putting down his basin of salts, and rising up to the height of an idea which had struck him, and which he was about to express. ‘Ah’ll tell yo whot; if yo wish to be happy as a wed mon, yo maun hev a woife wi’ three virtues in her—th’ virtue o’ good temper, th’ virtue o’ claneliness, an’ th’ virtue o’ aiconomy; wi’oot which, yo conno be happy, let her be otherwise as she may.’

‘But how am I to come at a woman with those virtues?’ I asked.

‘Ah wor bawn ta tell yo. Now, yo may come at th’ furst by axing th’ naybors; they knaw reet weel th’ tempers o’ aych ither. Or yo may form a goodish ida-abh by takin’ gauge o’ her fayters an’ th’ expression ov her fa-ace. As to whether she’s clane, just yo find aat wheere she keeps her dish-claft, an’ tak th’ scent on’t. If it smell swate, I’s uphod it she’s clane iverywheere.

An’ than as ta aiconomy, yo take a poipe naa an’ agin; vary weel, just yo hond her a pratty lang bit o’ papper, an’ ax her cannily ta leet yer poipe for ye. She’ll do’t; an’ moind, if she knocks aat th’ leet an’ puts whot’s left by for another leetin’, yo may set it down as she’s a careful body; but if she throws it behint th’ foire, stop afore yo further goa, ah say.’ Saying which, he resumed the supping of his salts, while his happy wife’s face shone with unwonted amiability.

There were many odd folks in the parts about which I write while I lived there, but Abigail Roe was the queerest of them all. She was of such odd and uncertain temper, that no one knew, when about to approach her, how he would be received; and so, unless forced, no one went near her; wherefore, for many years before she died, she was shunned by her neighbours. It was well for her that she was fond of work, for it kept her out of many scrapes into which her temper would have driven her, had her time been at her own disposal. Her husband was a farmer, and like his spouse, was a somewhat earthly-minded body. So they often in busy times left their house early in the morning for the fields, returning only when the crows were winging their slow flight homewards. Richard was a local preacher in a Methodist Society, and being a quiet and inoffensive man, and kindly disposed withal, he was much pitied by many because of the cantankerous temper of his better-half, who at times greatly tried the poor man’s patience. Much to the surprise of every one, he had somehow prevailed upon Abigail to entertain the preachers with bed when they came to the village, and one of them with board besides; but whenever she had the chance, arising out of Richard’s absence, she had the door locked and herself out of sight before the preacher’s arrival; and then he might knock to his heart’s content. One of the fraternity once called in at Abigail’s with the view of relieving himself of his carpet-bag, while he attended to a little business in another part of the village. The moment he made his appearance, she exclaimed: ‘Your whooam is at Philip’s, you knaw.’

‘I do know, Mrs Roe,’ said the young fellow, in good temper. ‘My only object in calling now is that I may leave this bag. May I do so?’

‘Clap it daan onywheree!’ said the dame impatiently, and walked into the yard, while the parson went on his way.

Returning next minute for an article he had in the bag, the young divine was just in time to hear Abigail cry out to a listening neighbour: ‘These parsons ‘ud eat yan oot ov ‘oose an’ ‘arbour if yan ‘ud let ‘em; but I’ve loundered you chap off ta Philip’s!’

Purposely attracting the irate dame’s attention by shuffling his feet on the floor, Abigail was assured, on putting her head within the door, that her uncanny speech had been heard by him whom she had ‘loundered off;’ and so it became an earnest inquiry of hers during the rest of the night in what way she could best atone for her rudeness. She had evidently resolved to get to the parson’s heart through his stomach; for the next morning, on his presenting himself at her fireside ready to go to Philip’s, she said in a soothing tone and with a smile: ‘Yo needna gang ta Philip’s ta morn; yo mun stop an’ git break-

fast wi' me; I've mad' it reight wi' Philip.' And so he stayed.

Never had Abigail made a more sumptuous repast than the one provided on that occasion; for there was 'fatty-cake,' ham-rashers, poached eggs, the richest cream, and a cup of ruby tea, all but the cream smoking hot; from which the young divine went on his way quite conciliated for the incivility of the previous night.

Not long before she died, poor Abi. fell into a sore temptation, and became a wrong-doer in another way: not only so; but her uncanny act became known to her neighbours, and that too in connection with an incident, the remotest allusion to which filled her ever after with unpleasant emotions. An apple-tree belonging to a neighbour threw one of its branches in close proximity to Richard Roe's garden. One year, this bough was laden with fruit, the temptation to purloin which was irresistible to some one, as was denoted by the fact that day by day the branch was seen to rise higher and higher.

'My apples are fast diminishing!' said the owner; 'I wonder if Abi. is the thief?'

He resolved to watch and, moreover, to frighten the pilferer, if caught, into better behaviour. Hence, with a sheet rolled up under one arm, he crouched behind a clump of raspberry bushes. It was getting dark when the watcher heard operations going on in the adjoining garden. A step-ladder was put in position; presently a hand was seen busily lessening the apples on the tempting bough.

'My Ribston pips are going like magi; I must stay the process,' so, throwing the sheet over his head, and standing erect with his arms lifted up, he cried in a solemn tone: 'Thou shalt not steal!' A sound as of falling apples, and then a leap on to the ground and a run; finally, the banging-to of a door not far off, and the scene ended.

Next day, seeing Abigail at the back-door, the apple-owner got into conversation with her; in course of which she related, in earnest manner, how on coming into her garden the night before, she had been appalled by seeing and hearing a real ghost in his garden. 'I ran back wi' all my might,' said Abigail; 'an' it'll be some time before I sell her courage to enter my garden after dayleet's gone,' she added.

'Maybe my apples will be suffered to ripen now,' said the man, in a way which brought a blush on to poor Abigail's cheeks, and caused her to creep off in evident shame and confusion of mind.

Richard was fond of relating an incident which took place in the village, which I will recite, and then leave him and his old wife to rest beneath the sod which covers their grave. A nonconformist minister of great eminence was in the habit of holding a preaching-service now and again in the kitchen of a farmhouse not far from Richard's. The latter never missed the pleasure of hearing this 'Prince of Preachers.' On one occasion, there was no one present who had sufficient musical talent to enable him to put a tune to a hymn. The preacher was evidently annoyed at this; for after repeating the first two lines of the hymn once or twice, and waiting each time for a voice tuned into melody, he asked: 'Can no one pitch a tune to this hymn?'

'Noa, sur,' said an old gray-headed patriarch

who was seated in a corner near the fire—'noa, sur; but theer's an owd chap here as con whussel th' owd 'undred!'

Leaving these recollections of things pertaining to the ordinary aspects of life, I will now turn to matters belonging to another class—a class which one would suppose no longer existed except in tradition. A belief in witchcraft lingered in most of the villages which I was in the habit of visiting. I know it to be a fact that whatever subtle disease laid hold of either man or beast, or whatever fatality befell a family, it was by some laid to the charge of an evil-eye, or to the wicked machinations of a woman in league with the Wicked One. There must be many who buy the wisdom of the 'wise-man' and 'wise-woman,' else the latter could not lay up the riches which they do. It is not more than ten years since a woman died in one of our large West Yorkshire towns who had for many years flourished on the superstitious credulity of her fellow-creatures. She combined the wisdom of the astrologer with the skill of the medical botanist; and under the guise of a parcel of dried herbs, she received pay for a prescription for the dissolution of a spell of witchery, or for a well drawn-up nativity. At this witch's death, a young woman who had lived with her from childhood, and had acted as servant and companion, became heiress to her possessions. Every drawer in the house was crammed with rich and costly dresses and shawls; and the cupboards contained over three dozen silver or silver-gilt tea and coffee pots, with a vast number of silver cups and silver spoons—all the presentations of wealthy ladies, whose fortunes she had told, or whom she had delivered, according to their belief, by her occult incantations, from the power of some evil spell. But are not such persons themselves more worthy of punishment than the 'wise-one'; seeing that, were it not for the purchasers of such-like wisdom or power, there would be none to sell it?

During his residence in rural places, the writer came into contact with not a few who had been at one time or other, in mind, body, or estate, under the supposed power of witchcraft. The witch, unlike the generality of such folks, was not always old or ugly. Sitting one day in the house of a respectable mechanic, he was startled by the sudden action of the mechanic's wife, who, rising from the seat by the fireside, rushed in mortal fear towards the door, where, seizing by the shoulders a good-looking woman, who that moment was in the act of entering the house, she pushed her over the threshold, saying, with quivering lip and flashing eye: 'Come in here, if ta dare, thou bagtrash, thou!' The woman evicted, the door was put to with a bang, and the poor old lady retook her place at the fireside trembling in every limb. Need I add that the ejected woman was, in the judgment of the ejector, a veritable witch—one who had the power of assuming the form, or entering into the body of cat or hare, hurting whomsoever she listed?

It was my lot, while a resident in rural parts, to lodge for a time with a singular couple, whose belief in witchcraft, and indeed in all sorts of superstition, was as profound as it was confirmed. My bedroom had been made by cutting off a small portion of a large room by a partition of thin wood; and as the room was open to the

slates, a ceiling of lath and paper was put over my portion thereof. This sounded, when touched, like a drum. One night I was awakened out of sleep by hearing a tambourine-like noise overhead, occasioned by something going across this ceiling; then the something leaped down on to the room floor, scampered down-stairs, and away into the street out of an open window.

'Oh!' said I, 'it is only a stray cat;' and so tried to get to sleep again.

But anon I heard my hostess on the floor, and soon she was hard at work down-stairs, rummaging in cupboards and corners. I knew her search would be a fruitless one: so it was; but in a while, on returning to her bed, a long earnest whispered dialogue was held between her and her 'owd mom.'

At breakfast next morning, believing that something more was thought about my visitor by them than by myself, I asked the old lady, 'What had led her to make so diligent a search after the cat, as she had made.'

Looking me earnestly in the face, she said: 'Ugh! A cat, yo call it! If ah hed a-got hold on 't, ah wad a-cleaved its skull wi' th' fire-point,* see yo, an' laid its carcase on th' dur-stane; an' it wad a-been vary soon reported 'at a woman hed been fand dead i' bed wi' her skull cleaved!'

'What! Do you really believe that the cat and a woman are somehow mixed?'

'Ah knaw yo'll do nowt but laugh at me; but ah've suffered moore than anybody knows fra sich-lake cratures; an' ah dunnot want yo to be hurt by 'em whale yo live wi' us. We're in a bad naybr'hood!'

A few weeks after this incident, I was passing the house just as it was becoming dark; and slyly looking over the window-curtain, I saw my hostess sitting on a low stool with her chin in the palm of her right hand, and her elbow resting on her knee, staring into the fire. I had just entered upon manhood at the time, and so had the relics of boyish larking strong in me; therefore, acting on the promptings of the moment, I scratched on the window and mewed like a cat. The old lady sprang out of her reverie in a twinkling, and her face, the picture of terror, was turned to the window. I ran off. This was on a Saturday evening.

On Monday morning, while at breakfast, the old dame said: 'Well, Maister Brownson, we're bawn ta flit.'

'You're going to flit!' I replied, in unaffected astonishment. 'What has put that resolve into your minds?'

Fixing her bright and suspicious eye upon me, she said: 'I've told aar Richard 'at if he doesna flit me, he'll hev ta bury me. I've told him this often; but now he believes it. Yo recollect the cat, as yo call it, 'at wanted ta git at yo a whale sin?'

'Yes; very well.'

'Weel, it com' agen on Setherday neet just on th' edge o' dark. I wor by mysen. It com' ta that theere winda; it scratched an' it gowled ta git at me: nay, it wor fair mad ta git in; but it couldna, thank God. An' soa we're off fra here, I's glad ta say.'

* Fire-point is the name for poker among a class in West Yorkshire; it was the old woman's in question.

I may just add that so many had been the journeys which Richard had taken on Sundays to see the 'wise-man,' and so much had been the fee which he had had to pay each time for advice or for material whereby to neutralise the power of the witch, that this couple were kept in poverty all the days of their lives.

One more case only, and then I will tie up these gatherings from the stores of memory. In a beautiful rural village in a certain dale there lived, years ago, a mole-catcher; a man in middle age, the like of whom for vigour and health could not be met with any day. He was besides a well-informed man, and highly respected. At last, an interruption took place in his health; he began suddenly to droop and fade, and in less than a fortnight he was a wreck, his flesh gone, and his strength become perfect weakness. But he had no pain. This gave an element of mystery to his case; and the impression thus made was increased when the doctor said he could not make out the cause of the wasting. 'He must have taken some subtle poison, which his system could not rid itself of.'

A friend of the writer's went to see this poor fellow just at this stage of his malady. That he was ill, yea, nigh unto death, there could be no question; and as day succeeded day and no change took place, it began to be whispered that his was a case of foul-play. 'The second time,' said the friend, 'that I went to see the patient, he was alone, and cheerful as a lark, though weak as an infant and worn to a skeleton.'

'I sall soon be all reight agen,' said he, most emphatically.

'Indeed!' said the hearer. 'Has the doctor said so?'

'Not he!' was the reply; 'he wad let me dee, that he wad; but me wafe hes gone wheere she wanted weeks agoan, if I wad but a let her.'

'I began,' said the friend, 'to suspect that something out of the common order was in the wind, so let the man go on.'

'Yes, fra th' furst,' said the patient in a whisper, 'me wafe believed as I wor under a wicked spell, an' soa wanted to goa to th' wise-man; ' but ah didna think as she did. Last neet, hooiver, seein' as theere wor but a step abween me an' deeth, an' as nowt seemed to stop th' complaint, ah began to think as theere meight be moore in the wafe's idea than in me ain, an' soa I sed, dee as she thinks; an' soa she's off ta-day; an' yo'll see as I sall be all reight agen very soon.'

'I simply relate what took place,' concluded my friend, 'without offering an opinion. That night was spent in following the directions of the wizard; a series of spells and incantations were gone through; the man took a turn; his appetite came back; and in less than ten days the mole-catcher was up and out of doors, and in a few weeks more he was in the fields after the moles. Of course, if "conceit can kill, conceit can also cure."

Ere long, it will be seen what education will do in eradicating a belief in such witchcraft-power as I have described, and which still lingers in some rural neighbourhoods and elsewhere. As I have said, persons who move in higher circles have consulted the 'wise folk' on matters such as loss of health and of property; hence, there seems to be

an innate tendency to ascribe to the supernatural what may really belong to the more occult departments of Nature. This, education will no doubt open up, and so dispel delusion.

A FEW FINAL HINTS TO INTENDING TEA-PLANTERS IN ASSAM.

IN addition to the articles upon Tea-planting in Assam, which have already appeared in our columns, we hereby offer a few final hints to young men who contemplate trying their fortunes in the far East.

From a gentleman who has been for some years in Assam, and from whom we have had no previous communication, we have received the following hints, the perusal of which may induce those who propose to try their fortune at tea-planting in Assam, to give the matter a little further consideration. The writer says :

Situations in Assam have been so run after of late, that I fancy they will soon be open only to those in a position to bring strong influence to bear in the right quarter, or to men able and willing to pay a premium for the first three years' experience. I have already heard of several instances in which premiums have been paid, and may mention, that in answer to a single advertisement in one Scotch paper, offering three years' employment in tea without remuneration, over a hundred applications were received. I think it hardly possible that the climate and prospects in Assam can be thoroughly understood by, or fairly represented to the many, who are so anxious to try their hand at tea-planting.

The first and most indispensable quality required in Assam, is robust health. When I mention that the Insurance Companies refuse policies, except on premiums equal to those on Indian military lives, I think I am more than justified in drawing close attention to this point. The climate is decidedly a very bad one, and requires the most undoubted constitution to bear up against it. From the number of men physically unfit, who have come out lately only to die in the country, or leave it in a few months, I think the evils to be coped with cannot be thoroughly known at home. A man's being strictly temperate in his habits, is greatly in his favour, as temptations to 'peg' with brandy are continual.

In the second place, sound good sense, and a dignified, firm, and decided manner are requisite; while any peevish or nagging spirit has a very bad effect on the native labourer.

Thirdly, let a man be more or less a Jack-of-all-trades. Let him have a knowledge of agricultural chemistry, let him be able to bleed a horse or bullock, to pack the manhole of an engine, to swing a sledge-hammer, to plan a house, to survey a garden, to mortise a joint, to keep a set of books, and in an emergency to physic a sick coolie.

And lastly, let him have some private means to fall back on, should the climate prove too much for him.

As, notwithstanding the foregoing hints, some—intend upon giving tea-planting a trial—will doubtless venture to the East, the following notes as to outfit, &c., may be useful. On this, as on many other subjects connected with life in the tea

districts, many erroneous ideas are entertained. I have seen men come to the country with the most extravagant amount of clothing, one half simply useless, and three-fourths of the remainder very soon rendered so, by the attacks of moths, white ants, and damp. What would you think of a young man—ay, and that young man a Scotchman too—bringing out nine pairs of cord riding-breeches? You may consider this ridiculous, but I assure you such a thing has happened; and absurdities of the same kind are occurring every week, all for the want of a little useful information.

On no account should any of one's old clothing be left at home. A coat which may have been thrown aside as useless in England, comes in very handy indeed of a wet morning in the garden, when a better one would be completely spoiled. Old home boots are as good as, if not better than new. The sole, the first part to go to the bad in the old country, has little or no tear or wear on it, where not a stone can be picked up within a radius of ten miles. The sewing, however, exposed to the incessant damp of Assam rains, soon gives way, more especially if any tugging—usually so necessary in putting on new boots—be indulged in. Two or three pairs of American pegged, lace ones, not heavy, but of the best material and workmanship, should be provided, together with a couple of pairs of canvas shoes, and a pair of leather gaiters with spring fastenings.

Besides all his old wardrobe, then, let him provide a serge suit for the voyage, a few suits of cricketing flannel, a couple of dozens of shirts, made wide at the neck and sleeves, and composed of jute. These are usually known as Oxford shirts, and are to be preferred from the fact that no insects ever attack them. A supply of woollen underclothing sufficient for two years should be taken, and a lot of woollen socks with double heels and toes. Should the latter not be easily obtainable, have a little bit of chamois leather stitched in at those points, or better still, let the embryo planter, among his other accomplishments, number the very useful one of darning. A pair of Bedford cord riding-breeches, strapped, makes a useful addition to the above list; while a large strong umbrella, and a waterproof-coat are indispensable. Towels, both hand and bath, should be taken, as well as some rough cheap table-cloths and napkins, and a few bed-sheets. A small supply both of cutlery and crockery, though subject to a small duty in India, should be brought out.

If firearms must be added to the baggage, let them be represented by a twelve-bore, central-fire breech-loader; and if too much money be still unspent, a four hundred and fifty express rifle might be purchased; but on no account let us have any more revolvers.

SEA MESSENGERS.

READERS of the voyages of Columbus will recollect the expedient to which that discoverer had recourse when caught in a storm off the Azores. Believing himself near death, and not wishing the king and queen of Spain to be ignorant of what he had done in their service, he wrote as much as he could of his discoveries on a skin of parch-

ment; 'and having wrapped it up in a piece of cerecloth, he put it into a wooden cask and cast it into the sea.' The position of the *Investigator* and *Enterprise* at a certain time was, if we mistake not, made similarly known to the Admiralty; and another wave-tossed messenger, thrown overboard from the *Erebus* on her way to the Antarctic seas, is said to have been picked up off the Irish coast.

Repeated experiments with bottled and other sea messengers have often furnished navigators with information as to the force of the wind and waves and directions of the currents. Charts, as we have on a previous occasion shewn in these columns (*Chambers's Journal*, No. 314, Jan. 1870), have been made of the wanderings of these curious ocean-waifs, some bottles afloat having safely accomplished such trips as from America to Europe; and others, thickly incrusted with shell-fish, turning up several thousands of miles from the place at which they were thrown overboard. Could a log-book be kept of some of these storm-tossed bottles, it would furnish some interesting items; as for instance, when one, cast adrift over a thousand miles from land, is months afterwards discovered within a short distance of the port whence the vessel sailed which took it out. Another being picked up, is perhaps found to have been over a dozen years at sea, as if its contents were the spirit of a second *Vanderdecken*; but probably, like the bottle in Dickens's *Message from the Sea*, such an erratic messenger would pass most of its time 'floating in a corner of the smooth water, within some reef, entangled in the seaweed.'

That such frail vessels are considerably influenced by the wind, is well known; and experimenters have made observations from the respective conduct of metal cylinders and wooden bottles weighted with lead—the latter proving much duller sailors under like circumstances than their more fragile models.

As is too well known, there are persons, weak-minded and vicious, who take a delight in perpetrating the paltry hoax of fabricating false news by means of sealed bottles thrown into the sea. As an example of this scandalous practice, it was reported some time ago that a sealed bottle was picked up at sea containing the announcement of the loss of the ship *Vermont*. To leave no room for doubt, the paper bore the name of the skipper, together with a pathetic statement that it had been written 'in sight of death.' These sad tidings must of course have caused grief and consternation among the friends and relatives of those on board the ill-fated ship, not to speak of the underwriters who had insured the vessel and her cargo. As the *Vermont* reached St. Helena 'all well,' the announcement turned out to be a hoax. The further mischief of such jokes is obvious when it is said as much as eighty guineas premium per cent. was offered for re-insurance, in consequence of such news coming to hand. As a newspaper justly remarked at the time, marine insurers have already quite enough odds to contend against in their business, without any more risks of this description being added to them.

Even the most sceptical underwriter would feel inclined to re-insure if informed by a solemn voice from the deep that a vessel in which he had taken a risk was lost with all on board. As the very

profitable nature of the trick would soon bring it into favour with the swindling brotherhood, underwriters must feel specially interested in the swift detection and punishment of such experimenters. At the time this paper was written, the Admiralty received a telegram stating that a bottle had been discovered floating in an eddy of the river Weaver containing a message from the sea to the effect that the missing training-ship *Atalanta* was dismasted in a fearful hurricane. The manuscript was signed—Boy—H. SMITH. But as no boy of that name is said to have been on board the *Atalanta*, and the position of the bottle was not one in which such a waif was likely to be found, there seems little doubt that the affair was a dreary hoax.

A few instances of messages from the sea, reported from time to time to have been found, like Poe's manuscript, in a bottle, are here added, but like the one just mentioned, may perhaps be taken for what they are worth. A girl picked up in the sea near Barrow a securely corked bottle containing a scrap of old newspaper on which was indistinctly written: 'Gone down off the coast of Ireland the steamer *Combat*, with all hands—CAPTAIN YATES.' There was no mention of date on which the ship sank, but the writing appeared to have been hurriedly done.—On the shore of the Bay of Luce a bottle was reported to have been found containing the following message, written in pencil on a piece of paper, the writing being much faded: 'On the 29th of April 1876, the ship *Herclades* was wrecked on the extremity of Patagonia. Crew in the hands of savages. Bring us assistance.'—During a fearful winter storm, it was conjectured, from the large quantity of wreckage floating about, that many vessels had been lost at the mouth of the Tay in addition to those reported at the time. Some particulars reached the press—whether verified or not the writer is unable to say—that a letter inclosed in a bottle was cast ashore on the Fifeshire coast giving a clue to one of these ships. The letter, blotted and otherwise damaged by sea-water, was written in bold Norwegian characters, and was thus translated: 'Schooner Bay, Tonsberg, 25th December, eight morning. We are now in a sinking condition, within sight of the Bell Rock, outside the river Tay. We have had both boats smashed and carried away, and cannot therefore make an attempt to come ashore. We have experienced great hardships during the heavy gales in the North Sea. Greater part of rails, stanchions, and bulwarks are away. We have been labouring constantly at the pumps for three days, and the forecastle and cabin are full of water. Everything is destroyed, and we have had but little to eat. We now put our trust in a merciful God; and if it is our fate to die, we hope to arrive at a heavenly throne. The crew is otherwise all well, and asked to be remembered to their dear ones at home.—(Signed) H. MATHISON, captain of the schooner Bay.' The letter bore the address 'To Tonsberg, Norway.' The name of the Bay was on the Norwegian shipping-lists, and she would have a crew of seven or eight hands; and is supposed to have been bound coal-laden from the Tyne to Norway. This sad message from the sea was reported to the owners.

Considering what has resulted from mariners' experiments with bottles afloat, and how often, after disasters at sea, these have been the means

of communication between the living and dead, too much cannot be said in condemnation of thoughtless persons who perpetrate hoaxes of this description.

THE MONTH.
SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE boring of a deep well last year at a brewery in Tottenham Court Road has confirmed a geological theory, and brought to light remarkably interesting facts. Some twenty-five years ago, Mr Godwin-Austen, from observation of the geology of Belgium, stated that, in his opinion, 'an axis of Palæozoic Rocks was prolonged from the Ardennes under the London Tertiary district, and that a band of coal-measures coincided with the line of the valley of the Thames, where it might some day be reached.' This has been verified by the boring above mentioned; for, at a depth of one thousand and sixty-four feet, 'beds of undoubted Upper Devonian age, as proved by their fossils, were met with.' At Crossness, one of the outlets of the London main drainage, at a depth of one thousand and eight feet, rocks have been found which, 'from their mineral character, are believed to be of Devonian age'; and further corroboration was met with in sinking a deep well between Hertford and Ware for the New River Company. Taking all the facts into consideration, Mr Godwin-Austen draws the inference, that 'the lower members of the true coal-measure formation may be expected to occur at about a quarter of a mile to the south of the corner of Tottenham Court Road and Oxford Street, and the upper or productive coal-measures still farther to the south.' It would astonish Londoners not a little to see a coal-mine opened in Leicester Square or at Charing Cross. Nevertheless, these deep well-borings, as has been remarked by a F.G.S., are 'contributing towards the solution of two problems of great economic importance—the existence or otherwise in the south-east of England of productive coal-measures at a workable depth; and the position of the Lower Greensand or of other permeable beds sufficiently deep-seated and extensive to furnish the metropolis with a large and never-failing supply of pure water.'

Read in connection with Professor Armstrong's observations described in a recent *Month* (*ante*, p. 414), the account of Professor Pringsheim's experiments becomes the more interesting; the learned German philosopher and botanist, by concentrating solar light on vegetable tissue, under a microscope, having made a series of micro-photochemical observations on the chlorophyll and protoplasmic constituents of the vegetable cell. He finds that the absorption of oxygen increased with the intensity of the light, and especially with the intensity of the chemical rays. But the increasing intensity of the respiration finally involves danger, and the light, which is necessary for accumulating carbon, becomes hurtful as soon as oxidation exceeds assimilation. The chlorophyll, by its luminous absorption, helps to balance these two opposite functions. By its preference for the chemical rays, it diminishes the respiratory effort, and thus acts as a protecting screen; so that even in the brightest sunlight the assimilation of carbon exceeds the oxidation of the carbonaceous products. Hence, contrary to the prevalent opinion,

chlorophyll has no direct relation with the decomposition of carbonic acid, but it serves rather as a regulator of vegetable respiratory action.

If plants require temperature for their development, they also require light; and it appears as if, in some instances, light could be substituted for temperature. This is shewn in the effects of almost uninterrupted summer sunshine upon vegetation in high latitudes. In Finland, barley ripens in eighty-nine days from the date of sowing; but in the south of Sweden under a higher temperature, one hundred days are required. A grain of wheat grown near the sea-level in Norway or in lower latitudes, when propagated at high elevations or in a high latitude, will mature earlier, even although at a lower temperature; and it is said that, within limits compatible with its cultivation, the grain increases in size and weight. Experience has shewn too, that plants raised from seeds ripened in a high northern locality, are harder than those grown in the south, and are better able to resist excessive winter-cold.

Gardeners in the Azores have observed that the development of buds of roses and some other flowers is quickened by the admission of smoke into the conservatories. Would the effect be the same in other parts of the world?

In a communication to the Linnean Society, Mr F. Day brings forward an interesting array of facts to shew that those authors who have assumed that fishes are deficient in instinct and 'emotional sensations,' are mistaken. Allowing that the faculties of fishes are not so acutely developed as in the higher races, Mr Day still claims for the piscine tribes that some, at least, 'have attachments, whether in the form of conjugal feelings, paternal and maternal affections, or even of platonic friendship. Some,' he says, 'construct nests, which they defend, as well as the young when hatched out. The males may act the part of nurses to the eggs, either carrying them about in purses, or even in their mouths.' Lastly, he mentions 'the fact that members of two distinct families may combine for the purpose of attacking another inhabitant of the deep, and thus obtain a supply of food.'

In an octavo volume of nearly a thousand pages, the Commissioner of Fish and Fisheries appointed by the government at Washington, presents his Report on the inquiries made into the condition of the fisheries of the sea-coast and lakes of the United States; and the history of the measures taken for the introduction of useful food-fishes into American waters. The amount of information conveyed in this Report is as valuable as it is surprising. There are descriptions of the fish chosen for propagation experiments, including the shad, Pacific salmon, the Atlantic salmon, the land-locked salmon, the white-fish (*Coregonus albus*), the carp; and of the endeavours made to introduce the sole, the tench, and the turbot from Europe. Copious particulars are given of the fishery of the menhaden (*Clupea tyrannus*), called also moss-bunker and fat-back, of which in one year more than one hundred and seventy millions were caught off the shores of Connecticut and Long Island. This is the fish which, when properly cured, is largely exported as American sardines; and details of the manufacture, and pictures of the vessels employed and manner of catching, are given. Moreover, 'as a source of oil, the menhaden is more important than any other marine animal.'

its annual yield exceeds that of the American whale fisheries by about two hundred thousand gallons.' The refuse of the oil factories is valuable as a fertiliser; and in 1875, the quantity of ammonia derived from this source was estimated as equivalent to sixty million pounds of Peruvian guano.

This Report contains further an account of the fishery questions between England and the United States; of the geographical distribution of the cod, and its relations to commerce; and, with abundant particulars, of the fisheries of Norway: something interesting for all readers.

The *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* contains an account of the ravages perpetrated by rats and mice in the Dakhan during the harvest of 1878-79. The winter-crops were first attacked, and the green Sorghum (millet) stalks were decimated by the hungry destroyers; but soon whole fields were gnawed down in two or three nights. When, in consequence, food became scarce, the rats gathered their forces, and invaded and quickly devastated fields at a distance. In some places, they did not cut down the stalks, but climbed and gnawed off the ears of grain. Some of the ears thus cut off were partially eaten where they fell, and some were hauled off by the rats, and stored away. A good deal of the grain thus stored was dug up by the inhabitants and used for food. Egg-plants, melons, carrots, and even lucerne were devoured; and as these ravages 'extended over several thousand square miles,' the consequent distress among the people may be imagined. They were driven to eat the seeds and leaves of wild plants, and to import grain from surrounding districts. They take no pains to destroy the pests, from a belief that the angry divinity which sends the rats will send more. Or, thinking that their countrymen who died during the famine have since been born as rats, they say: 'We did not feed them when they were starving, and now they have come back to eat us out.' But Nature interposes a check to some extent. Certain species inhabit the black soil. If the wet season begins with heavy rains, the ground swells, and smothers the rats in their burrows by tens of thousands. And the black-winged kite, formerly rare in the district, is now seen in flocks, keen devourers of the rats. But unless more comprehensive means are used, the rats of Dakhan will outrivale the beetles of Southern Russia and Colorado.

At a meeting of the Society, an account was given of a monkey having been trained to do useful work—that is, punka-pulling. A Langur monkey two feet six inches in height, strong and savage, was tied to a post: his hands were made fast to a punka rope: a man seated on the opposite side began to pull; and after a while, the monkey learned to pull, and during some years swung the punka by himself, and, as we are told, 'enjoyed his work immensely.' He was set to train four other monkeys, and succeeded well with two males, but failed with the two females. If the experiments could be successfully multiplied, the present punka wallahs of India might find themselves superseded by monkeys.

We mentioned some time ago Dr Schwendler's suggestion to employ dynamo-electricity in punka-pulling. This has not yet been put into practice; but in the Dalhousie barracks at Calcutta, the punkas are pulled by compressed air.

Many years ago, oculists in St Petersburg proved that cataract could be cured by application of electricity. In their mode of treatment, a needle was inserted in the substance of the lens of the eye, and was connected with the negative pole of a galvanic battery, and the positive electrode was placed on the patient's tongue. 'Short applications of a mild current resulted, in all the cases, in the liquefaction and final absorption of the cataract.'

Cataract is a consequence of defective nutrition of an important part of the eye. Dr Evetzky of New York says: 'The three properties of electricity—stimulation of the intra-ocular lymph current, of the capillary circulation, and of the innervation of the eyeball—meet the nature of the greatest number of cataracts so directly, that we may say in advance that electricity will be of essential benefit not only in the treatment of incipient and advanced senile cataract, but also as a hygienic measure in improving the senile state of the eyes, and preventing the occurrence of the disease itself... It is important to free ourselves from the idea that cataract is an inert lifeless thing, with which we can deal only by the knife.'

Cold water, that is the water dripping from melting ice, has been found beneficial in some affections of the eye, especially in cases of photophobia or intolerance of light. Dr Oppenheimer of New York believes that the astringent and antiseptic effects of the cold exert an influence on the cure. Some readers will perhaps remember a very old remedy for diseased eyes, namely, to dip the face in cold water and keep the eyes open.

A remarkable case of double consciousness is recorded in the *Mémoires* of the Society of Physical and Natural Sciences of Bordeaux. A sempstress aged sixteen while at work would suddenly fall into a stupor, which continued a few minutes. Then her eyes opened, her countenance became animated, and she entered on a condition of existence entirely different from her normal condition, and so remained for a few hours; but the morbid condition increased, until after some years it greatly exceeded the normal. In the normal intervals, the young woman had no remembrance of anything she had said or done during the morbid periods; but when in these, she remembered the series of emotions and incidents from one to the other, and came in time to regard her morbid existence as superior to the other. And yet more remarkable, she could recall what had taken place in the interposed normal moments, or as she termed them, her 'crises.' Studied from a physiological point of view, this case has led to the conclusion that the alteration of memory was due to an alteration in the quantity or quality of the circulation through the brain.

That infirm teeth can be taken out and replanted in the jaw with good effect, has been stated in these columns. The subject still occupies the attention of dentists; for we find the President of the Odontological Society mentioning in his anniversary address, that the 'replantation of teeth promises at no distant period to pass out of the domain of experiment, and to take its place, within certain limits as to age, temperament, and alveolar integrity, among accepted and recognised surgical proceedings.'

At the suggestion of a German chemist, the

horses of a cavalry regiment in Germany have been fed on dried flesh-meal, greatly to the improvement of their condition and appetite. To insure assimilation of the whole of the albumen, a small quantity of chloride and phosphate of potassium and of phosphate of magnesium must be mixed with the flesh-meal.

A German Professor having satisfied himself by experiment that tubercular disease (consumption) can be produced by infection and inoculation, sought for a remedy; and, as is reported, found it in a chemical mixture of benzoic acid and soda. A group of rabbits affected by tuberculosis were all cured in a vapour of that preparation.

Dr Oswald, formerly Director of the city hospital at Vera Cruz, in an article *On the Relation of Diet to Yellow Fever*, endeavours to prove that that disease is produced by diet, and not by climate. 'The so-called hotbeds of disease along the coast of South America,' he writes, 'are remarkable for the frequency rather than for the destructiveness of their epidemics. In Vera Cruz, for instance, the outbreak of an undoubted indigenous yellow-fever endemic between the first of July and the middle of August, is an annual phenomenon; but the experience of a full century has proved that the plague confines itself to four generally not very numerous classes.' These are foreigners from North America and Europe, and their black or Indian servants who imitate their habits. 'The native citizens of Vera Cruz,' continues Dr Oswald, 'would ridicule the idea of the contagiousness of yellow fever. Not philanthropists only, but idle ladies and children visit the city hospital and the houses of fever-stricken foreigners. From the mouth of the Rio Grande to the delta of the La Plata, neither physicians nor laymen entertain the slightest doubt about the origin of all idiopathic fevers, but refer them to dietetic abuses as unhesitatingly as we would ascribe dyspepsia to the same cause.'

A contrast is then made of the flesh-diet and stimulating drinks of the foreigner, and the diet of fruit, vegetables, and water of the native; the immunity of the latter is pointed out, and the Doctor thus concludes: 'If we could ascertain the antecedents of those families or classes of our population who furnished the largest quota of typhus and yellow-fever patients, and of those who enjoyed the most conspicuous immunity, the comparison of their respective dietetic records would convince us that the contagious principle discriminates in the choice of its victims, and that there is no such thing as a *pandemic disease*.'

In a communication to the Société de Géographie at Paris, Mr Girard describes the changes which the territory of Holland has undergone within the historical period, chiefly through calamitous floods. For a while, water had the mastery; but the inhabitants, with untiring patience and resolution, drove back the ocean, and reconquered the land. The dimensions of some of their barrier-banks are surprising. One on the island of Walcheren is three thousand eight hundred metres long, and more than seven metres above the highest tides. Since the beginning of the sixteenth century, more than eight hundred thousand acres have been reclaimed; and the work of reclamation is still carried on at the rate of about eight acres a day. Since 1850, the Lake of Haarlem has been converted into a region of farms and

villages; and the pumping-out of the Zuyder Zee will surpass in magnitude all the endeavours yet made to compel the ocean to restore the land so remorselessly engulfed centuries ago. The device of the province of Zeeland (*Luctor et emergo*) will then acquire a new significance.

To this we add, that in digging the great canal which makes a deep-water communication between Amsterdam and the sea, more than twenty-five million cubic yards of earth and sand had been taken out, and used to heighten the land near the coast. The width of the canal at bottom is eighty-eight feet seven inches—nearly seventeen feet more than the Suez; and in damming up the waters of adjacent lakes, more than thirteen thousand acres of land were reclaimed; which effected a considerable change in the physical features of the country.'

If the accounts we hear of the doings of the Plating Company at Stockton-on-Tees be correct, housekeepers and maids-of-all-work should be saved much trouble in connection with grates, fire-irons, &c. By a process of nickel plating, fenders, fire-irons, bars, gas-brackets, mouldings, &c., can be rendered proof against rust; and may be cleared by rubbing with a leather, or—when dull or dirty—with soap and hot water. We understand that this nickel plating can be applied to any metal save zinc.

A LAMENT FOR SUMMER.

WEEP, Mother Nature, weep;
Summer is dead.
See! there she lies in her shroud of flowers,
Drooping her sun-crowned head;
While the Past Hours
Kneel, all weeping round her flowery bed.

Blow gently, Autumn Winds;
Sigh soft and low;
Summer only knew Zephyr's balmy breath;
But she that loved him so
Now lies in death.
Sing ye her dirge—but sing it soft and low.

Mourn, O ye Dryads! mourn!
Your woods are bare.
The gracious Summer with her sunny light
No more will linger there.
Her spirit bright
Has spread her wings, and vanished into air.

Soft fall, ye Autumn Rains!
Summer has fled;
Fall gently on her fair and fragrant face,
As tears from heaven shed.
Lost is her grace;
Then weeping, fall on the belovèd Dead.

E. M. B.

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